



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.-Kans.)

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SIXTY YEARS LATER, IKE MESSER'S GETTING HIS SILVER STAR MEDAL

WASHINGTON-- Isaac H. Messer-- "Ike" to his friends-- was discharged from the U.S. Army in 1918. When he got his papers his commanding officer told him he was entitled to a medal, but it would "take a little time."

It did. Sixty years.

On Tuesday Ike Messer of Plains, Kansas, will receive his Silver Star in a ceremony at Ft. McNair, Virginia, at 3:00 P.M. in the conference room of Building 32.

The next day Ike will meet with President Carter and with Senator Bob Dole (R.-Kansas). Senator Dole's office assisted Ike's grandson, Steve Jacobs of Wichita, in obtaining the tardy medal.

Actually, Ike Messer will be getting three awards: Silver Star; World War I Victory Medal with Battle Clasps for Defensive Sector, Ypres-Lys, and Somme Offensive; and the World War I Lapel Button.

Ike, who will be 82 in September, doesn't say too much about what he did to earn the medals; only that he was "too dumb to be scared." Actually, Ike was pretty crafty-- he lied about his age to get into the Army and in May of 1918 was sent overseas with the 30th Infantry Division and was attached to the British 2nd Army Corps at Ypres, Belgium. While on patrol his unit came under heavy German fire, and he became separated from the rest of his men. On his way back to his lines he heard a British soldier cry for help, found him, and carried him on his back, crawling over a hundred yards before reaching a secure position.

He won a British medal for his feat. He wore it for one day and then took it off, saying he "didn't think much of foreign medals."

Ike still works, at a co-op grain elevator in Plains. And he has recently had a pacemaker installed to help him recover from a heart attack he suffered last August.

Ike says he's happy to be coming to Washington-- not so much for the medal, "but to see the sites."